

WCGS_News

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January, February, March 2007

Happy New Year!

DEEDS FOR METHODIST PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN WASHINGTON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA:

The first major schism in American Methodism occurred in 1828 when the Methodist Protestant Church was established as a separate branch from the Methodist Episcopal Church. The first annual conference of the Methodist Protestant Church in the United States was held at Whitaker's Chapel in Halifax County, North Carolina, on December 19-20, 1828. Washington County was a center of much Methodist Protestant activity during the nineteenth century.

July 16, 1850 - Rehobeth Church

Joseph S. Norman of Washington County deeded to Thomas Norman, Gisbourn I. Cherry, William C. Slight, Ira E. Norman and Abraham Chesson, Trustees of the Methodist Protestant Church, one and 7/8 acres of land on the main road leading from Plymouth to Columbia for \$5.00....."excepting the right and title in and to said piece or parcel of land, to my heirs, whenever said Trustees of the Methodist Protestant Church or their successors in office; the members of said Church, or those lawfully authorized to act for said church, cease to keep a church or house of religious worship on the said premises, or cease to use said premises in any way for religious worship..." In this case, the Trustees or their successors or the members would have the right to remove any building or buildings upon said premises. The deed also stated that there would be no effort "to prohibit the members of the Methodist Protestant Church, their families and kindred the right of depulture (sic) in and upon said premises forever."

Book K, pp. 414-415.

1872 - Salem Church

At the Fall Term of the Washington County Superior Court, 1891, J. W. Blount, W. J. Cahoun and J. S. Chesson, Trustees of the Salem Methodist Protestant Church, sought to get a clear title to the land on which the church was situated from A. N. Vail, Daniel M. Bateman and wife, Lily L. Bateman, George Freeman and wife, Maud T. Freeman, Sally A. Vail and E. Caroline Vail. In the latter part of July, 1872, or the first of August, 1872, A. N. Vail and James G. Vail, "for a valuable consideration," gave a deed to W. J. Norman, J. S. Chesson and Reuben Sanders, Trustees of Salem Methodist Protestant Church, and to their successors. This land, on which the Salem Church was standing in 1891, was on the Plymouth and Columbia Road. The deed was not registered, was lost and could not be found. The defendants, Maud T. Freeman, Sally A. Vail and E. Caroline Vail, were heirs of James T. Vail and were infants. J. P. Hilliard was appointed to serve as commissioner to determine the lines.

Book 30, pp. 522-524.

November 10, 1891 - Salem Church

J. P. Hilliard, Commissioner, had the land deeded to J. W. Blount, W. J. Cahoun, J. S. Chesson, Trustees of Salem Methodist Protestant Church, for one dollar.

Book 30, pp. 527-528.

August 12, 1884 - Beulah Church

Wilson Oliver of Washington County and his wife, Annie Oliver, deeded to Hezekiah Chesson, Wilson Brabble, Edward Edwards, Julius L. Nowell (or "Howell") and Alfred Alexander, Trustees of the Methodist

Protestant Church, one acre of land adjacent to the lands of Wilson Oliver on the "public road" for \$5.00. The restriction was "that the Said Premises Shall be used (,) Kept, Maintained and disposed of as a place of Divine Worship for the use of the Ministry and Membership of the Methodist Protestant Church" and was to be subject to the discipline, usage and ministerial appointments of the General Conference and the Annual Conference.

Book W, pp. 480-481.

Note: The Beulah Methodist Protestant Church was later consolidated into the Creswell Methodist Protestant Church.

September 6, 1893 - Creswell Methodist Protestant Church

H. C. Spruill deeded to Alfred Alexander, William Wiley and E. A. Davenport, Trustees of the Methodist Protestant Church, a lot in the Scuppernong Township, adjoining the lands of the Creswell Academy and others, for \$30.00. Mention was made of A. L. Cahoun's line and Middle Street. The lot was 50' square.

Book 33, pp. 439-440.

September 6, 1893 - Creswell Methodist Protestant Church

A. L. Cahoun and wife, Minnie L. Cahoun, deeded to Alfred Alexander, William Wiley and E. A. Davenport, Trustees, a lot of land in Scuppernong Township adjoining the lands of H. C. Spruill, the Academy Company lot and others, for \$25.00. This lot, which was 10' x 90' x 60' x 40' amounted to one-fourth acre of land and was on Middle Street. It was to be used "for the sole and separate use, benefit and advantage of the Methodist Protestant Church..."

Book 33, pp. 440-441.

February 1, 1904 - Creswell Methodist Protestant Church

D. H. Holmes and wife, Minnie A. Holmes, deeded to William Wiley, C. W.

Woody and E. R. Spruill, Trustees of the Methodist Protestant Church, a lot in the town of Creswell, Scuppernong Township, amounting to three-fourths of an acre, for \$75.00. The lot adjoined the lands of Dr. W. H. Hardison, Alfred Alexander and others, and faced Sixth Street. It measured 200' x 100' square.

Book 47, pp. 324-326.

September 30, 1922 - Creswell Methodist Protestant Church

W. T. Alexander, O. O. Hatfield and G. S. O'Neal, Trustees of the Methodist Protestant Church of Washington County, sold one-half acre of land to the Washington County Board of Education for \$250.00. This land was in Creswell and on the corner of the Creswell High School lot, south of Middle Street. It was 90' x 60' square. Reference was made to the original deed, dated September 6, 1893.

Book 82, page 151.

May 7, 1896 - Plymouth Methodist Protestant Church

Matilda A. Jones and E. L. Tarkenton deeded to W. A. Alexander, J. S. Chesson, W. J. Johnson, Trustees of the Methodist Protestant Church in Plymouth, one-fourth of Lot #74, as described in the charter of the town, for \$150.00. This land was adjacent to the lands of G. W. Harrison and others and fronted Third Street on the Hilliard Corner. Mention was made of Tarkenton's line. The size of the lot was 48' x 100' square.

Book 36, page 103.

November 24, 1896 - Mount Hermon Church

A. G. Walker and wife, Mary A. Walker, deeded to Charly (sic) McGowan, D. I. Davenport and Carney Spruill, Trustees of the Methodist Protestant Church, a lot of land in the Scuppernong Township, 36' from the Canal, adjoining the lands of Walker and others. The lot was 50 yards by 30 yards by 50 yards. It was agreed that this lot would be used only for religious services by the Methodist Protestant Church and in case the Methodist Protestant Church should ever dispose of the property the house could be removed but the

land would go back to its former owner, A. G. Walker and his heirs. The property was to be used "for the sole and separate use (,) benefit and advantage of the Methodist Protestant Church."

Book 62, pp. 392-393.

December 10, 1954 - Mount Hermon Church

William C. Woodley and wife, Alenia P. Woodley, deeded land to A. W. Davenport, W. P. Davenport, and J. R. Davenport, Trustees of the Mount Hermon Church, on the corner of the Mount Hermon Church lot on or near Moccasin Canal.

Book 174, pp. 210-211.

The Methodist Protestant Churches in Washington County have traditionally been associated with the "Albemarle Circuit." In a North Carolina Business Directory for 1890 the following Methodist Protestant Churches were listed in Washington County:

- (1) Macedonia (Negro), Lee's Mills, N. C.
- (2) Pleasant Grove, Mackey's Ferry, N. C.
- (3) Rehobeth, Scuppernon, N. C.
- (4) Salem, Plymouth, N. C.
- (5) White Marsh, Plymouth, N. C.

NOTE: Mrs. C. N. Davenport, Sr., of Creswell, a member of the former Methodist Protestant Church in Creswell, states that Pleasant Grove Church was associated with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, denomination and was not Methodist Protestant. Its listing in the Business Directory was possibly a technical error or possibly there were Methodist Protestants who occasionally held services there. Mrs. Davenport also states that the White Marsh Church near Plymouth was not associated with the Methodist Protestant Church long since most of its members were "M. E.'s."

Mrs. Davenport's mother, Mrs. Katie Patrick Pitt, was the only member of the Beulah Methodist Protestant Church at the time the church was built. Mrs. Davenport joined the Beulah Church when she was 13 years old.

The churches on the Albemarle Circuit in 1908 were:

- (1) Creswell Church, Creswell, N. C.
- (2) Rehobeth Church
- (3) Edenton Church, Edenton, N. C.
- (4) Woodley's Chapel
- (5) Mount Hermon
- (6) Mount Elna (in Tyrrell County)

The Plymouth Methodist Protestant Church had been discontinued by 1908. The Edenton Methodist Protestant Church was discontinued about 1916 and was sold to the Lutheran congregation in Edenton.

The Gun Neck Methodist Protestant Church was on the Albemarle Circuit in 1901.

Two old deeds for Methodist Churches in Washington County:

December 4, 1824

James Davenport deeded one-half acre of land to Joseph Christopher, John Phelps Phelps, James Blount of Thos. (sic), Frederick Stuly and Harmon Tarkenton, Trustees, for the purpose of building on it a Methodist Episcopal meeting house. This land was on the north side of Lee's Mills and adjoined land belonging to the "Mill concern." The deed was to be in effect "so long as said Church keeps a House on said land for the worship of God."

Book F, page 201

May Court, 1835 - Hebron Church

In the May Court, 1835, a plea was entered asking, for the right to cut a canal that would lead from swamp lands to a landing on Mackey's Creek. This cut a small corner of land (not exceeding six feet) from the land belonging to the Hebourn (sic) meeting house. The spelling "Hebron" is also used in the deed.

Book G, pp. 714-715

Some Data About the Methodist Protestant Church in Plymouth:

The Journal of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church (North Carolina) in 1889 noted that there "was talk of removing the Salem Church in Washington County to Plymouth. The Journal of 1894 listed the "Plymouth Church."

Reverend D. A. Braswell was assigned to the Albemarle Circuit of the Methodist Protestant Church and began work in Plymouth about 1895-1896. Reverend Braswell took subscriptions and purchased a lot and some lumber with which to begin erecting a church. In the 1897 Journal reference was made to the uncompleted church at Plymouth. Reverend Davis was assigned to the Edenton and Plymouth work in 1896.

In 1897 the Reverend W. F. Ashburn was assigned to the Plymouth Church. There were 30 members on the Plymouth and Edenton Mission at this time, two probationers, three conversions, eight accessions and one removal. The value of the church property was \$2,100.00 and there was a Sunday school with three teachers and fifteen scholars. The Board of Church Extension gave an appropriation of \$40.00 each to the Edenton and Plymouth Churches. At the Annual Conference of 1898 a recommendation was made to detach Rehobeth Church from the old Albemarle Circuit and place it with Plymouth and Edenton Mission and let this constitute a circuit known as the "Plymouth Circuit." Reverend Braswell's address was "Skinnersville." He received a salary of \$218.50 for the year 1897-1898. The minister's salary in 1899 was \$355.00. In 1899 there was a total of 153 members, nine probationers, six conversions and four accessions. Miss Sally Cherry was the delegate in 1899.

The Plymouth congregation began worshipping in the new church in June, 1898. The outside was completed by September, 1898, but the church needed to be ceiled and completed on the inside. A "good bell" was purchased for the church. There were only twelve members in 1898 in the Plymouth Methodist Protestant Church. Among the members were W. A. Alexander, J. S. Chesson and W. J. Johnson, who were Trustees when the deed was made in 1896.

The President of the North Carolina Conference reported in the Journal in 1900: "The new church in Plymouth is not yet complete, but some work has been done during the year - - and the debt on the church has been somewhat diminished; while in Edenton a nice lot has been secured and paid for - - the brick bought and paid for, and the lumber and shingles secured, at least in part. Altogether about \$800.00.. (has) been raised for this important church enterprise." Rehobeth Church was detached from Plymouth in 1900 and returned to the Albemarle Circuit.

Plymouth and Edenton constituted a mission. Reverend Braswell was returned to the work at Plymouth in 1900 and Miss Sally P. Cherry was the delegate that year. C. Tarkington was the delegate in 1901 and Reverend R. L. Melton was appointed pastor in Plymouth. There were 75 members in Plymouth and Edenton in 1901. Plymouth paid \$80.00 of the pastor's salary claim of \$150.00 and Edenton paid \$90.00 of a \$100.00 claim. The Albemarle Circuit in 1901 was composed of the following churches: Creswell, Woodley's Chapel, Mount Hermon, Gum Neck, Rehobeth and Mount Elma.. (Mount Elma was in Tyrell County.)

The President's Report in the Journal in 1902 noted: "The church in Edenton is... (enclosed) with the exception of windows and doors. The flooring and ceiling... (have) been donated, and...(are) waiting, to be put up. This church should be completed as quickly as possible." Reverend Charles J. Edwards was pastor of the Plymouth Church in 1902-1903. He was paid only \$127.24 out of a salary claim of \$200.00. In 1903 Reverend Edwards was commended for collecting money for the Edenton Church. A total of \$160.50 out of a promised salary of \$200.00 was paid in 1903. In 1903 some 27 members were discontinued from the Plymouth and

Edenton Churches. Members in the two churches totaled 44 and the value of the two churches was \$5000.00. Reverend C. A. Swift was assigned to the work in 1904. He resigned, however, so that he might enter school and the churches were left without a pastor. The Board of Church Extension appropriated \$200.00 for the work in 1905. The work was not supplied with a pastor in 1905. G. H. Leary was the "Lay Member" or delegate to the Conference in 1905.

There were 41 members of the two churches in 1905 and the church value was \$7000.00 for the churches. The pastor was paid \$75.00 of a \$100.00 claim. Miss Sally Cherry was the delegate in 1906. Reverend S. W. Taylor was assigned to Plymouth and Edenton during his vacation in the summer of 1906. He was a seminary student.

The pastor was given \$300 from the Board of Church Extension in 1906. Reverend G. L. Curry was assigned to the work in 1906 and in that year Edenton was attached to the Albemarle Circuit. Plymouth was not listed and was probably discontinued about that time. (Source: Old WCGS Files, Contributor: Unknown)

Notice

North Carolina, Washington County, Superior Court

The Board of Drainage Commissioners of Washington County Drainage District No. 5 vs. Martha L. Thompson, Rita C. Thompson, C. C. Warren and wife, Dorothy Thompson, Robert F. Thompson, N. C. Thompson, J. H. Thompson, L. S. Thompson and wife, Doris Thompson, and Martha L. Thompson, administratrix of W. C. Thompson, H. D. Bateman, trustee, and Branch Banking & Trust Company.

The Defendants, W. C. Thompson and Dorothy Thompson, his wife, will take notice that an action entitled as above has been commenced in the Superior Court of Washington County, North Carolina, to wit: To foreclose certificates of tax sale covering tract No. 30 of the drainage map of Washington County Drainage District No. 5 of record in the office of Register of Deeds for Washington County, said assessments having been levied in the name of W. C. Thompson Estate for the years 1926, 1929, and 1930, amounting to a total of \$941.84 and penalties.

The said defendants will further take notice that they are required to appear at the office of the Clerk of Superior Court of said County in the courthouse in Plymouth, North Carolina within 30 days from and after the 17th day of February, 1933, and answer or demur to the complaint in the said action, or the plaintiff will apply to said court for the relief demanded in said complaint.

This the 23rd day of January, 1933.

C. V. W. AUSBON Clerk Superior Court - Washington County, North Carolina (j27 4t)

(Previous item: ditto D. J. Saunders for 1929 in amount of \$86.02) (Roanoke Beacon)

Forestry Centennial Celebrated in County

ROPER - Louis May, keynote speaker for last week's centennial celebration of North Carolina forestry held at the Vernon James Research Center, said the story of the John L. Roper Lumber Company was, regrettably, not one about forestry, but about the lumber industry during that era when it was born, flourished, died.

May, introduced by Bill Barber, 17-year veteran forester with Weyerhaeuser Co., Inc., is "perhaps the world's foremost authority when it comes to the history of John L. Roper Lumber Company." A native of Pitt County, May, a wood dealer, has been in the timber industry for more than 30 years. He told the audience

invaluable data is to be found at the University of North Carolina on the lumber company for which Roper is named.

"There's no better place to tell this story than in Roper, Washington County," said May, who first heard stories about the lumber giant as a child. "My father was a mill superintendent in Pitt County," said May. "There were workers there who'd worked for the John L. Roper Lumber Co."

John L. Roper was born in Pennsylvania Oct. 6, 1835 and died in 1921 at the age of 85. "Although he attained the rank of major in the Union calvary, the title 'Captain' clung to him all his life. May recounted the history of the lumbering giant from its inception to its eventual demise, citing such other well known names as John A. Wilkinson, who built what is now River Forest Manor in Belhaven. He termed an ongoing feud between Roper and the head of Richmond Cedar Works as "the second Civil War of the Swamp."

During a question-and-answer period following May's remarks, several in the audience asked whether May had, or intended, to publish the findings of his extensive research efforts. In response to a negative answer, May was encouraged to do so.

As part of the celebration, three Washington County students were presented trophies as first place winners in competitions staged by the Centennial Committee: Joshua Davenport, for poster; April Boston, 8th grade essay; Jacquelyn Parrish, 7th grade essay. Gerda Rhodes, Washington County Cooperative Extension Service, made the presentations.

As part of the Centennial Celebration, the three students participated in the planting of three trees, provided by Weyerhaeuser, on the grounds just before a catered dinner was served by Griffin's Quick Lunch of Williamston.

Jimmy Davenport, N.C. Forestry Service, recognized American Tree Farm Families: Bill Porter, Wesley Chesson, Paul Miller, Elizabeth Morris, Charles and Dennis Allen. Special tribute was paid to Davenport and his crew for "what they do for us and Washington County."

Davenport also recognized the Jack Webb family for planting more trees in Eastern North Carolina than anyone else.

Sponsors for the affair were Weyerhaeuser Co., Inc., Mackey's Ferry Saw Mill; Roanoke Forest Products and East Coast Products. Other exhibitors included the North Carolina Forestry Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Pettigrew State Park, Tidewater Research Center and Parris Trail of Edenton.

Exhibits included printed materials, wood products and a display of Trail's sculptured fish using wood from a variety of trees, including some that surprised those attending the meeting. Other exhibits included materials either gathered or published by Paul Lilley of the Research Station.

The state's first practicing forest service chief, Gifford Pinchot, began work on the Biltmore Estate, Asheville, in 1892. By careful management and research, North Carolina now has "more trees than we had even 60 years ago." A framed plaque from Gov. Martin was presented to Davenport by Barber.

Thursday evening's celebration was one of several being held across the state, sponsored by the NC Forestry Association, established in 1911. North Carolina holds the distinction for having founded the nation's first forestry school, the Biltmore forest School in 1898.

Barber served as county coordinator for the celebration and served as master of ceremonies for Thursday night's program.

(By Shirleyan Phelps 4/01/92 - For Roanoke Beacon)

HOME IN THE BACKWOODS

It was 1944 and dad moved our family in a house located on the farm of Mr. Joe and Mrs. Lina Swain. The purpose was not to farm, but was a temporary move while in the process of building a new house in the community of Mackeys near his Mom and Dad. We grandchildren called them "BigMama" and "BigPapa". This temporary move was in an old two story clapboard unpainted farmhouse in the community called the "back woods," very much explained by its name. This house was where Mr. Swain was born and raised and built by his father. The move was one mom would talk about years later. At that time she had a son on active duty in the Navy and in harms way supporting WWII, the house was hardly habitable, the country dirt road immediately out front, was either very dusty or muddy, depending on the season of the year. The back yard was grass-less because it was part of an active barn and stockyard. The water source was a well off some distance in the barnyard used to water the livestock, and at times to keep the little spring frogs happy. There was an upbeat side to this move. Mr. and Mrs. Swain lived close by in beautiful country home and they were wonderful people.

However, children seem to have a way of adapting to most any circumstances, after all the burden did not fall on us to provide the daily essentials. In fact, most of us have fond memories of the year we lived in the "dropping off place", as mom once called it.

There were five of us, all boys, home at that time. Raymond was the oldest, a senior in high school, I was the middle at ten years old. A sister would be born while there, to make six before we moved away. The four oldest in the family were "out on their own," it was always enjoyable to have them come home, which they did as frequent as the constraints of the war would allow. We were indeed a very close-knit family.



SWAIN FARM BACK WOODS RD.

The facilities for our chickens were even less than desirable, they seem to just roam at will. We had a flock of speckle guinea chickens and they could fly for great distances and would roost in the large oak trees across the road in front of the house at night. Under these large oaks was our woodpile, that is the name given the location where the wood was sawed, chopped and kept to burn in the heater and cook stove. They would fly out across the field and nest in secret on the ditch banks. After one of the guinea hens would lay an egg, she would make a loud cackle as she flew off, away from her hidden nest. Mom would have us boys on the lookout to find the nest. Once it was found we were to get a large spoon from the kitchen and take all the eggs from the nest, except three, without disturbing it. (Yes, three). I have no idea why unless those crazy guinea hens could count, and three was the magic number. The eggs were speckled and mom would only use them to cook with and not fry or scramble for breakfast. Like-wise that is how she would use the large duck eggs. Don't know why? That's just how I remember it! You can bet she knew what she was doing! The guinea's were a very nervous and noisy fowl and made good "watch dogs." If strange animals or people came in the yard, they were sure to let you know it with their special loud crazy cackle. And they sure could dispose of a lot of insects. Except mosquitoes that is. We sure had plenty of them even in the house at night with the lack of good screens on the windows and doors. Did you ever lie in bed on a dark hot summer night sweating and mosquitoes dive-bombing your head and body? Especially your ears. You slap yourself almost senseless and practically bursting your eardrums.

I enjoyed hanging out at the big barns behind our house when Mr. Swain and his bachelor son Earl were working or feeding the livestock. They had two sons off in the war, Earl the oldest, was allowed to stay home and work the farm. I remember when they corralled their hogs for the winter hog killing. Using a 22-caliber rifle, someone made a bad shot at one of the hogs and did not hit just the right spot. The hog ran around the pen making an ear-piercing squeal. Boy did that create some excitement!

There was a path through the woods in front of the house for several hundred yards to a county dirt road called Flappers Lane. This road has been paved and is now named Marriners Road. My teenage brothers would use this as a short cut when visiting friends or going to and from school activities in Roper. I remember one of them coming home one night telling about seeing large ball of fire moving in the woods on the ground in front of them. Someone called it FoxFire. Now try and explain that to a little kid who was not very fond of the dark as it was, especially in the woods alone! Little did I know about the effect of phosphorescent light on rotten wood or something like that, glowing in the dark. After all, I was hardly out of the three basic R's in school. One thing for sure, that section of the woods was not one of my favorite hangouts after hearing that story.

Anticipating the arrival of the rural mail carrier was the high light of each day for Mom and the Swains. They had two sons and a son-in law in the Army and mom had one son in the navy. All three homes were within sight of each other. All these boys were in military action and months would go by at times without hearing from them. These ladies were a great comfort to each other while sharing their mail and their anxieties.

This would be the location where I rode one of the fastest country road single bike-a-thon ever. So the story goes like this: It seems the oldest boy at home usually would be the one to own a bicycle, probably because of the hand-me-down effect. At this time brother Raymond was the bike owner. There was nothing more exciting than to roll up your right pants leg, (so it would not get caught in the chain and sprocket), and get your big brothers permission to ride his bicycle around the yard or up and down the dirt road.

Some people will never admit it, but I have always believed that everyone at some time in their life has wanted to be in command of something or someone. Probably my first was when I could ride a bike. In charge, in control and I am the boss of this thing! Another was to hitch a mule to the cart, hop up in it with the reins in my hands and say, "get-up mule" that means, this boy is in charge of this 900-lb animal. These reins were meant to control and direct. Of course the real big event in a boy's life would come when he would turn sixteen years old. On this day, in September 1950, I would drive my Uncle Henderson's candy-apple-red 1946 Ford pick-up to town for my driver's license. Parallel park on the curb, identify some road signs on some pages, and \$.50 in cash, I was now legally in charge, in control of that machine. No turn signal, power brake, power steering, turn signal, A/C or auto transmission. WOW. In those days that was truly a big deal.

Now back to the bike ride: One day I was selected to go to Mr. Clint Tarkington's General Merchandise store on Highway #64 (a hard-top road we called it in those days), in the Pleasant Grove Community. My brother's bike would be the mode of transportation. I don't recall whom the trip was for, or its purpose. The distance was about two miles, mostly wooded area with only a couple homes along the way. About a half mile before reaching the highway was a sharp ninety-degree curve. Located close to the edge of the road and right in the bend of the curve, was a small wood schoolhouse with several rooms, resting on pillars about three feet from the ground.

This was sure to be a time I could show that I knew how to be "in charge". The first mile and a half of this journey went well over the long country dirt road. However, as I approached the sharp curve with the little schoolhouse sitting dead ahead, I could see something underneath moving around. I dismounted the bike and proceeded to walk-it so I could get a closer look. Sure enough my suspicion was correct, there really were some black bears there. I recall they were moving around and could hear them bumping on the floor

joist and making other noises. No way was I going to ride by that building, sitting right at the edge of the road with those bears underneath. I mounted the bike, headed for home. Dead ahead, record speed, arriving at home out of breath. The trip to the big country store was sure to be a failure. However things were not a total loss. After seeing my condition, hearing my convincing story, and the smoking bike, Ray decided he would get a bear. With the old 12 gauge shot gun that belong to our Granddaddy Albert, tape wrapped around the cracked stock, on his bike he would hastily go. I was sure he would be returning home soon with one of those black bears drooped over the bike's handle bar. That did not happen!

Soon he would return home and tell the story of how he parked his bike along the road, got down in the ditch, slowly worked his way toward the school building, all of this to allow a good clear shot. Off from a distance I am sure he could hear and see the same thing I did. Once he was within shooting range, he discovered these black bears were now black hogs, still moving about and bumping the floor joist just as I had seen. How could that be possible? I know I saw bears! Don't recall the words verbatim or the reaction after his return, I think it all ended in a big laugh. It wasn't long before everyone was aware of the fast ride and the big hunt. Mr. Swain, and his son Earl

never let-up on me the balance of our stay at the Back Woods home on their farm. Don't recall that I was ever "grounded" while there. And of course my brothers never let up razzing me for a long time after that.

In fact that bicycle would eventually belong to me. In the spring of 1945 we moved to Mackeys in the new house Dad built, Ray graduated from high school that year and moved to Washington D C. I rode that bike for many miles. All around the country selling the weekly *Grit Newspaper*, running errand's, "hanging out" at the Mackeys railroad depot, riding up and down the loading dock and around the fish houses. The many bike rides down the dusty back woods road in the years of 1944/1945, especially the encounter with all those bears, [I mean hogs], stayed so very clear in my memory.

Bob Spruill



Bob & Raymond

MULE AND HORSE TALES

I never imagined the day would come, when I would desire to tell of the experience and recollections of the common mule and horse as I was exposed to them. Walking all day behind a one-row plow pulled by an old over-worked, worn out mule on a hot summer day over a half century ago was certainly nothing to crow about. Or was it? Life is full of old and new experiences. That just happens to be one I lived through and don't regret a moment of it. At that time I might have thought it was pretty tough. I use to think that once I became an adult and left home, I wouldn't tell a mule to, "get-up" if he sat in my lap! And now, today, I wish I had a young mule or horse that I could feed, water, care for and simply observe as it spends the days at leisure grazing in a green pasture.

The era of time following WW-II [World War Two] when I was a teenager, was the beginning of phasing out the mule and horse on the farms in eastern North Carolina. The small one and two row tractors began to appear on the landscape all around the countryside. That put me in the last generation of boys who walked behind a one horse and mule plow. I was recently sharing this story with a friend of mine at church who is my

age, and he told me he was replaced by one of those small tractors where he was raised in Eastern North Carolina. His dad purchased a tractor the fall after he left home the previous spring. He seemed a little unhappy about being replaced by a tractor. One thing for sure, his Dads mule must have been pleased. This was just one of the many great changes that transpired during the late forties and early fifties. The large stake body farm truck normally seen hauling several mule and horses around the countryside was slowly disappearing from the scene. Mr. Joe Sugar, the horse trader was slowly put out of business by the new generation of small Farmall and John Deere tractors. It was indeed enjoyable to be in the area when Mr. Sugar would drop the tall tailgate of the truck and lead the animal by its halter up and down the steep incline. I always thought the mules would fall and break their neck as they stumbled up and down the ramp.

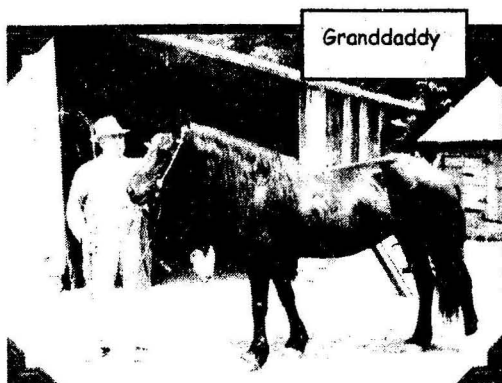
From 1940 to 1944 we lived on a one mule fifteen-acre farm known as the "Bunch" place located about a half mile south of the community of Mackeys, aka; Mackeys Ferry. I will start my story with the "Bunch Place" farm because that is where my first years of real recollections of the mule and horse's began. Prior to that we lived on the large Spruill home place farm owned by my Grandfather. That of course is where my older brothers followed the horse and mule plows and have their special tells to tell. I had heard some one say that as a rule of thumb, one draft animal is required for every fifteen acres of land and approximately three acres required to feed that one animal a year. By the looks of old Martha, she sure did not get her three acres allocation. She was so old she was white all over. Now some would say she was gray! Which brings up another point! Why is it when some one gets old and their hair starts to turn white, [like mine] every one says you are getting gray hair? I once had a gray automobile, and I once had a white automobile, and they sure were not the same color. Martha the mule, or the old-gray-mare at [The Bunch Place] as she was called, was one sad looking animal. She just seem to stand around the yard most of the time looking forlorn and sad, with her head down. Some of the older boys [I was between the age of six and ten those years] could walk right up and get on her back and ride around the yard without a bridle or halter. If she ever layed down on the grown to wallow, as mules and horses often do, she could not get up with out help most of the time. In fact, once when brother Raymond was plowing her in the field just behind the house where there was a gully wash, she fell down and could not get up that was one sad sight. There lying in this gully wash, all tangled in the plow traces, harness and reins was this old gray mare. I was only a kid and an observer on the side, but if I recall Raymond had to get some of the local men to help un-tangle and get her to her feet. Those years during the war, our Dad worked away from the farm most of the time. If I remember correctly, the old-gray-mare fell over and out of the back of the stable [stable not so good] one night, managed to up-right herself and wandered over in a little field on the opposite side of a swamp and died. There a large grave was dug and she was laid to rest. Long ago there was a song titled; "The Old Gray Mare Ain't What She Use To Be". Guess there really is some truth to that.

This story of Martha the mule reminds me of a story a friend [Clyde Clary] told me that happen to one of his neighbors over in Lawrenceville Virginian in the 1930's. A fellow was passing his neighbors farm and ask him if he was building a new mule. The neighbor said he did not understand the question and ask, what do you mean? The fellow passing by said, " I see you have the frame under construction"! Now that must have been one poor bony mule! Clyde said that was a true story and his neighbor loved that mule and owned it for many years and was rather upset about the remarks.



Walter Jr.

My Granddaddy Albert Phelps was a farmer who considered his animals valuable and essential to his livelihood. In the early 1940's he owned a large strong rather red looking mule he called Simon Peter, and a beautiful young black mare with long mane and tail called Nancy. Simon Peter really did most of the real work, and I think Nancy was considered his "Sports Car". Granddaddy loved to hitch her to his buggy or cart and go to Mr. Tarkington's country store, to church



or to visit people. However, she was hard to manage in the field, was rather flighty, and pulling a plow in the hot weather did not seem to agree with her. He eventually traded Nancy the mare for a small black mule he called Mary. Granddaddy would never allow any one to be cruel to his workhorses or mules, but boy he could loose his temper and beat up on them occasionally. Many of his grandchildren I am sure have a little story they could tell about how they had seen him get upset at his animals. We use to think it was rather funny to hear our grandmother, [Fannie mama we called her], say, " Albert, how can you go to Church on Sunday and loose your temper and beat-up on your mule like that"?

My last experience and exposure to walking behind a plow was a couple years before getting out of high school and leaving home. We were tending a farm on the Albemarle Sound known as the Pollard farm, located about three quarter of a mile from our house and I was the oldest boy home at the time. Now the animals we had there should have been retired also. We first started with Mary the red mare owned by Mr. Bud Everett who previously farmed the land. Soon after, Lucy the mule showed up on the scene, from where I don't recall. She might have been retired from the Spruill home place farm years before coming to us for use at the Pollard farm. I was a young teen in those days and those details I guess were of little significances at the time. Both Mary the mare and Lucy the mule were in their "out years" to say the least. Meaning their ribs was very much exposed and their days were numbered. Mary had really bad teeth and could not eat corn off the cob, so you had to shell it before putting it in the manger. This explained why as I recalled as a much smaller boy, when Mr. Sugar the horse trader would come to the farms, he would always take the mules and horses by the upper and lower lips, pull them apart and look at their teeth. Little boys in those days were not to ask questions, but wonder why! Guess the teeth must indicate the age or condition of the animal? It sure was in Mary's case! We children received no dental care in those days, so it is for sure those animals received none!



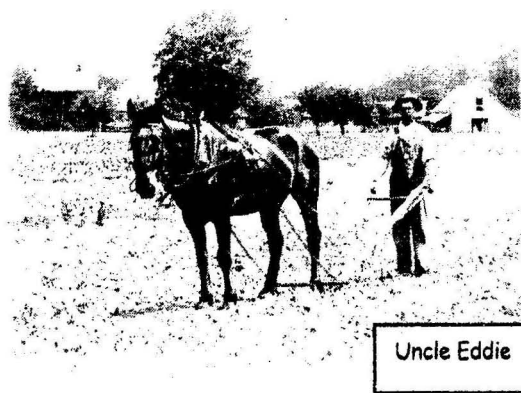
Mary the mare was a rather flighty animal like the mare my grandfather Albert owned but much older. She did not know how to pace herself while pulling a plow, was difficult to keep in the row where she should be, and did not obey the commands very well to "gee" and "hether" when told. Gee was go right and hether was left, or was the case where I grew up. In other parts of the state they would give the command, gee and haw. Why? I really do not know! If a mule was sold out of its region it sure must have been all mixed up! When she would not obey the verbal commands, you then had to use the reins to her bridle to get her to go

left or right. That was not good because most mares have a tender mouth and we boys were a little rough on the pull. It is possible her hearing was bad due to age and she could not hear the commands we were giving her. When the corn in the fields was a little over knee high and we plowed it for the last time, "hill it out we called it", Mary the mare would constantly eat the green blades from the stalks as she walked along pulling the plow. I would put a muzzle on her but it made no difference. Once you started to get on her case she was then impossible to work with. I think she was smarter than we realized, because she figured we would unhitch her and get old Lucy the black mule in her place.

Old Lucy was another story. Easy to manage and work with, but really slow and would sweat profusely on a hot summer day in the field. The term the farmers would use is founder. We could not let her have all the water she wanted when it was very hot and could not feed her much peanut hay. Funny thing about that! I could be plowing on a hot summer day, come in for dinner, let the animal have only a little water, not all she wanted, and give her three or four ears of corn and no hay at dinner. I would be starved, drink three glasses of ice tea, two or three corn meal dumplings, several potatoes, don't remember how much veggies and several ears of corn off the cob. The 900-pound mule pulled the plow, I walked behind the plow and weighed about 138 lb with clothes on, soaking wet. Now that sure does not seem right!

One day I was plowing in "back of the field", and "knocking off time" for dinner rolled around.

That is what folks use to call stopping work in the middle of the day for dinner. [Not lunch]. I think the term lunch sounded a little too puny to the farmers. I unhitched the plow traces and plow from Lucy the mule, and left them in the field. I left the collar and hames on her neck which was the usual procedure if you were coming back to plow after dinner. I directed Lucy along side the plow, put one foot up on the center of the plow beam to give myself a little more height as I proceeded to jump, pull and position myself up on her back. The white salty sweat all over her back along with the blood from the biting horse flies probably helped me to slip



Uncle Eddie

and slide on to her back! The rope reins of course were long because they reached back to the plow handles. The excess I gathered up in my hands as best I could to still allow me to control her. Once up on her back I insisted she must go in a full gallop. Of course, a mule was not bred to run, gallop, trot, or let's just say go-fast. We had hardly started crossing the plowed row ends when she stumbled with her front feet, head pitched down while I was holding on to the collar hames. I simply pitched forward along with the collar and hames, down around her ears and falling to the ground under her neck, yet still holding on. She simply stopped immediately. I will never forget the silly feeling that came over me. Lucy standing there with the collar and hames down on her ears and me dangling there under and holding on to her neck. I was too far away from the plow to assist getting back on her back, but with much insistence I eventually managed to get back on. So to the barnyard and barn we headed. This time a normal slow mule walk. Upon arriving at the barnyard, I think Lucy was aware she was no longer attached to the plow and traces, and with no concern of me being on her back, simply headed straight to the stable. I could see immediately she had her mind set on being fed her dinner as she was headed straight to the stable door, me pulling hard to the left and right with her head turning far around in those directions, but still headed straight to the door. The stable door was simply not designed to allow a mule to enter with a rider on its back. I dismounted just in time before she entered the door. So there I sat on the ground in the barnyard, on my butt in disbelief. What a close call! Such was the price a young country farm boy would pay for his crazy little shenanigans. Lucy had a mind of her own that's

for sure. When you would go in the stable to bridle her, she would turn around with her head to the rear of the stable and her back end at the door. Her stable was not very large and daddy had a hard time convincing me that it was safe to work my way around to her head all the way in the back. Not only that, she simply did not want the bit on the bridle put in her mouth and would hold her head as high as she could get it, and I was no tall Hercules country boy. I think she knew if I had to go to the back of the stable I would have to stand in her large piles of pooh-pooh.

There are other little stories I could tell about Lucy the mule when we were together those few years. After all, even a young country boy and the mule he works with had to adapt to each other's ways and work in harmony to get the job done. Many little things I learned about her, such as not wanting to go through large water holes [mud holes we called them], and she was spooked real easy if there was a snake around. There seemed to be lots of them at the Pollard farm I would see, as they would slither along the field rows going from the woods to the barnyard and barn. I use to think they were headed to the barn to seek out the rats and mice. But I will end it by telling how old Lucy was "put away".

Lucy the mule was discovered dead in the barnyard on a cold winter Friday evening. On Saturday morning Daddy had two men with shovels go to the farm with us to bury her. In those days there was a tallow manufacturing company in Norfolk Virginia that would travel any where with in a hundred mile radius and collect dead animals, especially large ones such as cows or mules and horses. Don't know why Daddy did not elect to do that. At least he didn't drag it off to the woods for the buzzards to dispose of like many others did in those days. We had an old 2-door "Model A" Ford with the rumble seat cut out and a little small truck body built in its place. This A-model was used to go to the farm $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from home, [when I could get it started]. It was not licensed to drive on the main road and had to be cranked by hand to get her going. I was not old enough to have my license, but I did love to run that little model "A" up and down that private road to the farm. So with the little Model "A" Ford we towed Lucy out in the field not very far from the barnyard and a couple hundred feet from an old large apple tree. Most of this farm is grown up to day, but there are still some signs of direction there. Bet I could take you today reasonably close to where I remember the hole was dug. Why? Well let me tell you, that kind of event rather stays with a young lad. The hole was dug in the earth, and old Lucy was rolled over in it. If I recall correctly, her hoofs were just about even with the top of the hole. That would never do because this was a field that had to be plowed come springtime. So down in the hole with the mule to pull her legs down below ground level. No way! The hole was simply not deep or large enough and the mule was stiff as a board. With the old Model-A Ford, he sends me home to get the ax. Upon returning with the ax, Dad proceeds to perform the amputation on all four legs. In the hole with the mule doing what he had to do was a little more than the two men could stomach. One of them turned and barfed all over the place. It was all Daddy could do to keep them on the job to fill in the hole after he had completed the job. The field where the mule was buried was always good sandy soil to grow peanuts, so there was no reason they could not get the hole deep enough. And there is no way you can lift a mule that weighs several hundred pounds out of a deep hole.

So goes the story of only a small part of Lucy the mule's life, as I knew it. It would indeed be interesting to know where she was all those previous early years, and others experience with her. I have reason to believe she performed her job well. God put the beast of burden here on earth to work for man; he made a good one in Lucy the mule. Bob Spruill

Our thanks to Bob for sharing those memories!

Member News

New Member, Elliott C. White, (409 Phelps Av., Glen Burnie MD 21060) writes: Researching Whites of Washington County. Starting Solomon White, born around 1795. (WHITE: Horace - Harris - Oris spelled various ways; I have census records and some deeds.) 12/8/2006 (I) received the newsletters today and saw Lewis Davenport's Bible record, his father Silas married Matilda White, my Great-Grandfather William Sheppard White's sister, her father being Horace mentioned above. I'm looking for information about Horace, his father, etc. Earlier, Elliott wrote: Back in the 1990s I talked to my Uncle J. Hollis White who lived on Winesett Circle in Plymouth. We looked through census papers and once went to the local court house and found things about his grandfather William Sheppard White and his father, Horace-Harris-Oris White (Sheppard's father); also an uncle who fought in the Civil War, Friley White. My Uncle Hollis passed away in July 2000 and I've since retired and now I would like to find out more about my ancestors. Please send me information or call me so I can get started.

More Member News:

Happy Holidays Shirley, Hope all is going well with you. Wanted to let you know that I finally have my act together with the Roanoke Beacon. Instead of doing a database (which I found extremely time intensive), I decided to just do a blog. I will selectively post items that I think may be more significant for genealogical purposes, but will post other items from time to time. I am using Blogger, so as a Google product, it uses Google search, so that should aid people in searching through the posts. I also use "labels" to group items of similar content, so that is another method that may help in some cases. In fact, I've already had a lady from UK who found it and found a news blurb that I posted to be helpful for her! That was cool. The address is <http://roanokebeacon.blogspot.com>. So far, I have got content a few issues from 1889 online. Hope you like. So, how do I go about submitting a blurb about this for the newsletter? :-). Happy Holidays! Taneya

Other members renewing share this info: Gloria G. Eller researching Harriet Lassiter (born 1815) and her father, Thomas Lassiter; need his wife's name.

Jean Chaplin Davis (Jdavis2169@nc.rr.com): researching Chaplin, McCoy, Swain, Dough or Doughe, Hall.

Evelyn R. Paul (epaul57778@aol.com) researching Spruill, Bray, Sexton, Hunnings, Cixon, Bennett and Paul.

Condolences:

Our condolences to member Terri Fagan Mitchell and family, in the death of her uncle. Mr. Fagan was a favorite with both residents and visitors to Plumlee while he was a resident there:

"Theodosius Demosthenes "T.D." Fagan, 102, formerly of 313 Wilson St., Plymouth, died Monday, Jan. 1, 2007 at Plumlee Nursing Center. A funeral will be conducted at 11 a.m. Saturday in Mount Hebron AME Zion Church with the Rev. Keith Lane officiating. Burial will follow in John Daniel Moore cemetery.

Mr. Fagan was born in Washington County on June 24, 1904. He was the son of the late Benjamin and Cymera Moore Fagan. He attended Washington County Public School and was a graduate of Elizabeth City State Normal School. He was married to Edith Latham Fagan, who preceded him in death in 1962. He later married Augusta Bell, who preceded him in death in 1986. He was retired from the U. S. Postal Service. He was a member of the National Alliance of Postal Employees, member of Carthegonia Masonic Lodge No. 38, M. D. Towe Lodge No. 74 of the Royal Arch, Order of Eastern Star, Grand United Order of Odd Fellows and Knights of Pythias. He was a former member of the Town of Plymouth Board of Adjustment. He was a member of Mount Hebron AME Zion Church, where he served as a trustee.

Survivors include one son, Theodore Beverly Fagan of Forestville, MD; two daughters, Barbara Bernard Fagan Campbell of Philadelphia, PA., and Carla Fagan Ford-Anderson of Brooklyn, NY; four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. The family will receive friends today from 6-8 pm at Mount Hebron AME Zion

Church. Arrangements are by Toodle's Funeral Home, Plymouth." (Washington Daily News pg 2a, Friday, January 5, 2007)

More About Arnolds:

Mae (Arnold) Hardison Alligood, age 90, died 9 January 2007 in Washington, Beaufort County, NC. She was born 12 Sept 1916 in Creswell, Washington Co., NC, daughter of John and Janie Furlough. Her mother died in 1917 during the flu epidemic and she was raised by the late Dave and Sarah Arnold. She married (1) Audrey Hardison (d. 5 Aug 1967), (2) Leroy Hilton Alligood (d. 18 July 1992.) Preceded in death also by sisters Esther Sellers and Florence Furlough; survivors include half-brother Wilbert Furlough and wife Joyce, Chesapeake VA. (Obituary *Washington Daily News* 10 January 2007.) Burial: Oakdale Cemetery, Washington, Beaufort Co., NC. Paul Funeral Home

Map Source:

Carolina Maps, 1101 Tuxedo Ct. Charlotte NC 28211 866-3NC-MAPS (866-362-6277)
www.carolinamaps.com GP Stout NC County Research maps. Old state maps, city maps, atlases, US Soil Survey maps. Etc.

Concord News:

Concord Primitive Baptist Church Preservation Society, Inc. (CPBCPS, Inc.) (as well as other civic, religions and social groups and the family) lost one of its ardent supporters in December. At "Homecoming 2006" Wilson and many of his family were among those present. Wilson was active from the beginning of our efforts to save the old meeting house. He is and will be sorely missed. He was dedicated to Concord. His obituary as it appeared in the *Washington Daily News*: Mr. Alex Wilson "Teddy Bear" Oliver, 75, of Creswell, died Tuesday, Dec. 12, 2006, at home. A funeral will be conducted at 11 a.m. Friday in the chapel of Maitland Funeral Home, Creswell, with Thomas Biggs officiating. Burial will follow in Azalea Memorial Gardens.

Mr. Oliver was born in Washington County on Nov. 27, 1931. He was the son of the late Winton and Annelizer Ambrose Oliver. He was married to Doris Rhodes Oliver, who survives. He retired from Weyerhaeuser Corp. after 38 years of service as a machinist. He served with the Creswell Volunteer Fire Department and with the Creswell emergency medical technicians, was chairman of the Washington County ABC board, member of Creswell Ruritan Club and board member of Concord Primitive Baptist Church Historical Society. He was a member of Creswell Baptist Church. Survivors include one daughter, Peggy L. Silverthorne of Portsmouth, Va.; four sons, Terry Oliver of Greenville, Todd Oliver of Columbia, Alex Oliver of Taylorsville, and Jeremy Oliver of Charleston, S.C.; one sister, Jo Ann Gay of Chesapeake, Va.; two brothers, Webb Oliver of Columbia, and Lester Oliver of Bath, Maine; 10 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren." Our sympathy to Doris and her family.

Current News:

We welcome new WCGS President, Virginia C. Haire. (2007-2008)

January Meeting: 21 January 2007 - 2:30 pm at the Lodge, NC 32 South, Plymouth. Speaker: Mrs. Frances Bickel Jones will tell us all we need to know about searching for our Revolutionary War ancestors. She is a charter member and officer with Brickhouse Landing Chapter DAR and was one of three co-editors of our bicentennial history: Washington County, NC: a Tapestry. (Few copies still available at \$40.) We had lively discussion at our last meeting and hope you'll join us to share your research news / problems.

We still need members to share results of their research for WCGS News: family group sheets, ancestry charts, queries, Bible records, photos - and like Bob Spruill, childhood memories.

Shirleyan B. Phelps, Editor WCGS News

WASHINGTON COUNTY (NC) GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND ORDER FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, St, Zip: _____

E-Mail: _____

Researching: _____

Membership: Family (\$18) _____ Individual \$15: _____

Order Form:

Census:

_____ 1800-1810-1820 Census	\$	10.00
_____ 1830 Census	\$	10.00
_____ 1840 Census	\$	10.00
_____ 1850 Census	\$	10.00
_____ 1860 Census	\$	10.00
_____ 1880 Census	\$	10.00 ¹

Washington County, NC Cemeteries:

_____ Volume I - Plymouth Township	\$	17.00
_____ Volume II - Lees Mill Township	\$	17.00
_____ Volume III - Scuppernong Township	\$	17.00

Washington County, NC Marriages:

_____ Volume I	\$	05.00 ^{*2*}
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Civil War Reader:

_____ 1995-2000 (6 issues in one)	\$	18.00
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Washington County, NC: a Tapestry	\$	50.00 40.00
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Concord Minutes 1810-1978	\$	20.00
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Add \$3 s/h 1st item, \$.50 each additional

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Make check/money order payable to WCGS and mail to: WCGS, Attn: Treasurer; Box 567; Plymouth NC 27962-0567; Washington County Genealogical Society meets 3rd Sunday, 1st month of each quarter (Jan, Apr, July, Oct) at 703 NC Hwy 32 South, Plymouth NC 27962 at 2:30 pm except when conflict with holiday - members notified by newsletter, web site and area newspapers. Newsletters published quarterly. Queries welcomed. Call 252-793-5236 or 252-797-4793 for info.

¹ Out of print - may be viewed online

² Out of print; may be ordered on CD.